



Five fucking movies on tap for you. Five DVDs stuffed in a sick slipcase with badass punk meets Rob Zombie style artwork. The slip art alone makes this tempting. The “pages” between the “cover” are what really matter. What I mean is, what’s up with the DVDs included? Y’all want to hear about more than just a slipcase I’m pretty sure. This is a pretty eclectic mix of underground filmmaking, with directors from John Russo to Ron Bonk represented.

Bonk helmed the first disc in the set, *CLAY*, whose title has a couple layers of meanings. Topmost is the reference to the main character, named Clay, a psychopath with an unusual way to pick his victim. He

walks public places with his hands open at his sides. The first person who brushes him, gets followed home and mercked. Clay's a nut. But his [Follow filmphreak](#) F...ir do serial killing with equally odd victim-choosing methods. He also ~~murders the home C~~...ady whose mental stability is shaky, at best. At first he befriends the lonely lady and then slowly takes over the role of her killed-at-war son. This psychodrama is as interesting as the serial killing plot. But, wait, there's more! Clay visits his father frequently. There's little love lost between the two, and the crazy-fuck stories Dad told Clay during Clay's childhood have only exacerbated things in the long run. And now Clay sees his Dad as more than a father – he is the LORD who forged Clay from clay and breathed life into him. Dad hates his son, always has, and that's why he filled his head with these tales. But it's come back to bite him in the ass. He was right that something was wrong with his kid, he just didn't know how wrong. Now Clay, when not murdering or impersonating (or bugging his "Lord"), is busy with his miniature world of clay people, all created by Clay but all stubbornly refusing to come to life when he breathes on them. His ultimate attempt at the creation of a golem finds him transcending to new materials and makes for the centerpiece of a disturbing climax. CLAY is a fine, intelligent piece of psychohorror with layers of subtext that make this headier viewing than normal in the genre. Schlock this is not.

While John Russo's MIDNIGHT 2: SEX, DEATH AND VIDEOTAPE does actually have some schlock, it's got enough gutsy psycho-horror to elevate it above some of the fare Night of the Living Dead alumnus have been involved with post-NOTLD. The central story of a disturbed young man and his obsession with finding new victims through the lense of his video camera and then torturing his victims to death in his basement is, despite the low rent context and probably because of it, an effective character-centric horror tale. The murderer's penchant for breaking the fourth wall brings us uncomfortably into the intimate life of a madman. It also allows for copious flashback footage from MIDNIGHT, which I've never seen (except for the generous helping of scenes in this sequel), which is why I wasn't annoyed. I've seen sequels that were in significant part comprised of footage from the previous entry and sometimes it works. Silent Night Deadly Night 2 is great because all the best footage (and the overall story arc) from the first are in the second, making for two movies in one. Anyway, MIDNIGHT is obscure enough that many watching MIDNIGHT 2 will not have seen it and will welcome a little flashbacking. MIDNIGHT 2 takes the story from the world of the occult by way of a crazy Satan-worshipping family to the grim, in-your-face grit of a serial killer story. The two films occupy different subgenres and even boast different tones. Pretty cool, really.

I SPIT CHEW ON YOUR GRAVE – with a title you have to think about for a moment – is one of the wacky creations from the mind of Chris Seaver, whose movies are packed with pop culture references, silly slang, over-the-top gags and goofy gore, doofy characters and some of the most offensive humor you'll find. In a fucked up twist on Day of the Woman (aka I Spit On Your Grave), a group of WOMEN rape and murder – murder BY rape, really – and their victims are men. Until one hick fights back. Mostly it's an excuse for Seaver's outlandish brand of humor but since I LIKE his outrageous brand of humor, I was glad to see this earlier effort. It's also one of his wackier efforts, at least in places, and that's saying something. The ball torture scene must be seen to be believed. It's funny, gross and disturbing all at once. If you don't like Seaver, you won't like this. If you DO, you'll be pleased to find that this actually has a couple of schticks you won't find in other Seaver pics. But, on the whole, if you know Seaver, you know what to expect.

HORROR ROCK is not a movie, per se. What it is is a bunch of scenes from indie and underground horror movies set to tunes from indie bands of a variety of genres. It's a "mixtape", in other words, both musically AND cinematically. The horror scenes are kind of interesting and it's cool to see shots from movies with which I'm not familiar (and ones with which I am), but the music is more of a draw than the footage. Punk, hair rock, thrash and more get represented with the likes of The Dickies, Elvis Hitler, The Pandoras, The Del-Lords and more! And I think John Russo had something to do with this too.

We finish up with HOLLA IF YOU HEAR ME KILL YOU, a song that mixes hip-hop industry melodrama with masked serial killing. It's part slasher part music movie, and it works all right on both counts. The murders are suitably graphic – like a knife up in someone's grill – and the prolonged bickering that represents the butting of heads in this heated hip-hop environment is pretty good at carrying the ego tension from the musical aspirants and their hangers-on.

There's enough fun viewing in here to be more than worth the \$20 retail price SRS STUDIOS is asking for AMERICAN GORE STORIES: SERIAL KILLERS GONE WILD.

Look for more AMERICAN GORE STORIES coverage soon! I've got a stack to watch and write up!

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